

§ 155.1000

**Subpart K—Exchange Functions:
Certification of Qualified
Health Plans**

SOURCE: 77 FR 18467, Mar. 27, 2012, unless otherwise noted.

§ 155.1000 Certification standards for QHPs.

(a) *Definition.* The following definition applies in this subpart:

Multi-State plan means a health plan that is offered in accordance with section 1334 of the Affordable Care Act.

(b) *General requirement.* The Exchange must offer only health plans which have in effect a certification issued or are recognized as plans deemed certified for participation in an Exchange as a QHP, unless specifically provided for otherwise.

(c) *General certification criteria.* The Exchange may certify a health plan as a QHP in the Exchange if—

(1) The health insurance issuer provides evidence during the certification process in §155.1010 that it complies with the minimum certification requirements outlined in subpart C of part 156, as applicable; and

(2) The Exchange determines that making the health plan available is in the interest of the qualified individuals and qualified employers, except that the Exchange must not exclude a health plan—

(i) On the basis that such plan is a fee-for-service plan;

(ii) Through the imposition of premium price controls; or

(iii) On the basis that the health plan provides treatments necessary to prevent patients' deaths in circumstances the Exchange determines are inappropriate or too costly.

§ 155.1010 Certification process for QHPs.

(a) *Certification procedures.* The Exchange must establish procedures for the certification of QHPs consistent with §155.1000(c).

(1) *Completion date.* The Exchange must complete the certification of the QHPs that will be offered during the open enrollment period prior to the beginning of such period, as outlined in §155.410.

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(2) *Ongoing compliance.* The Exchange must monitor the QHP issuers for demonstration of ongoing compliance with the certification requirements in §155.1000(c).

(b) *Exchange recognition of plans deemed certified for participation in an Exchange.* Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, an Exchange must recognize as certified QHPs:

(1) A multi-State plan certified by and under contract with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

(2) A CO-OP QHP as described in subpart F of part 156 and deemed as certified under §156.520(e).

§ 155.1020 QHP issuer rate and benefit information.

(a) *Receipt and posting of rate increase justification.* The Exchange must ensure that a QHP issuer submits a justification for a rate increase for a QHP prior to the implementation of such an increase, except for multi-State plans, for which the U.S. Office of Personnel Management will provide a process for the submission of rate increase justifications. The Exchange must ensure that the QHP issuer has prominently posted the justification on its Web site as required under §156.210. To ensure consumer transparency, the Exchange must also provide access to the justification on its Internet Web site described in §155.205(b).

(b) *Rate increase consideration.* (1) The Exchange must consider rate increases in accordance with section 1311(e)(2) of the Affordable Care Act, which includes consideration of the following:

(i) A justification for a rate increase prior to the implementation of the increase;

(ii) Recommendations provided to the Exchange by the State in accordance with section 2794(b)(1)(B) of the PHS Act; and

(iii) Any excess of rate growth outside the Exchange as compared to the rate of such growth inside the Exchange.

(2) This paragraph does not apply to multi-State plans for which the U.S. Office of Personnel Management will provide a process for rate increase consideration.

(c) *Benefit and rate information.* The Exchange must receive the information